

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A tire labeling system for positioning a label on the surface of a tire, the tire labeling system comprising,
an applicator configured to receive the label for placement on the tire, and a frame carrying the applicator, the frame facilitating movement of the applicator along a first axis, a second axis, and a third axis, and including at least one first guide for moving the applicator along the first axis, a second guide supported by the at least one first guide for moving the applicator along the second axis, and a third guide supported by the second guide for moving the applicator along the third axis.
2. A tire labeling system according to claim 1, wherein the second guide is formed as a cross member, the cross member supported by two first guides for movement along the first axis.
3. A tire labeling system according to claim 2, wherein the third guide is formed as a post, the post supported by the second guide for movement along the second axis.
4. A tire labeling system according to claim 3, wherein a carriage carrying the applicator is supported by the post, the carriage being moveable on the post along the third axis.
5. A tire labeling system according to claim 4, wherein the applicator includes an arm rotatably attached to the carriage, the arm being rotatable between a pick-up position and at least one application position.
6. A tire labeling system according to claim 5, wherein the applicator includes a head having a surface for receiving the label, the head being repositionable, according to movement of the arm, and movement of the

applicator along the first axis, the second axis, and the third axis, to pick up the label and apply the label to the tire.

7. A tire labeling system according to claim 6, wherein the surface includes an opening extending therethrough, and wherein said head is in communication with a vacuum line adapted to selectively apply a vacuum through the opening to pick up the label.
8. A tire labeling system according to claim 1, wherein the applicator includes an arm rotatably attached to the frame, the arm being rotatable between a pick-up position and at least one application position.
9. A tire labeling system according to claim 8, wherein the frame includes a carriage carrying the applicator, the carriage being supported by the third guide for movement along the third axis.
10. A tire labeling system according to claim 9, wherein the applicator includes a head mounted on the arm, the head having a surface for receiving the label, and being repositionable, according to movement of the arm, and movement of the applicator along the first axis, the second axis, and the third axis, to pick up the label and apply the label to the tire.
11. A tire labeling system according to claim 10, wherein the head is rotatably mounted on the arm to facilitate contact with the surface of the tire.
12. A tire labeling system for positioning a label on the surface of a tire, the tire labeling system comprising, an applicator, and a frame carrying the applicator, the applicator including a head and an arm supporting the head, the arm being rotatably mounted relative to the frame, and rotatable between a pick-up position and at least one application

position, and the frame facilitating movement of the applicator along a first axis, a second axis, and a third axis.

13. A tire labeling system according to claim 12, wherein the frame includes at least one first guide for moving the applicator along the first axis, a second guide supported by the at least one first guide for moving the applicator along the second axis, and a third guide supported by the second guide for moving the applicator along the third axis.
14. A tire labeling system for printing labels, removing the labels from a backing, and positioning the labels on the surfaces of tires comprising, a printer for printing labels, a platform supporting the labels, a take-up spool for gathering the backing, an applicator, and a frame carrying the applicator, the frame facilitating movement of the applicator along a first axis, a second axis, and a third axis.
15. A method for applying printed labels to a surface of a tire, comprising: supplying tire information regarding the tire to a computer; instructing a printer to print the tire information on a label; and using an applicator to remove the label from the printer and apply the label to the tire.
16. The method of claim 15 wherein the label is made self-adhesive and is mounted on a backing; the method further comprising using the applicator to separate the label from the backing before applying the label to the tire.
17. The method of claim 16 further comprising selectively applying a vacuum to the applicator to separate the label from the backing.
18. The method of claim 15, wherein the label exits the printer along a label path, and orienting the applicator along the label path to remove the

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label from the printer, then after removing the label from the printer changing the orientation of the applicator to apply the label to the tire.